

Capsule Summary
SM-572
Captain Benjamin Foxwell House
Leonardtown Vicinity
Private

1883-1884

The Captain Benjamin Foxwell House is a frame, three bay, two story, Italianate-style dwelling located on a promontory overlooking Breton Bay near Leonardtown, Maryland. Constructed in 1883-1884, the dwelling is not only architecturally significant, but also has important associations with a locally prominent schooner captain and the building contractors that he commissioned to build the house.

As a schooner captain, county commissioner, sheriff, and deputy commander of the Maryland State Fishery Force, Foxwell was well connected with the local political leaders and wealthy merchants, lawyers, and judges. Foxwell confirmed these connections with the construction of his house in 1883-1884. In the summer of 1883 Foxwell hired Stephen E. Norris and Andrew M. Garner to construct a frame house that overlooked his ancestral home near Foxwell's Wharf. Norris and Garner were well appointed contractors who had also built the house at Old Patuxent Farm (SM-527), St. Peter's Episcopal Church Rectory (SM-531), and renovated St. George's Episcopal Church at Poplar Hill (SM-12). Called "Mt. Chimborazo," Foxwell's dwelling was constructed in the Italianate-style and featured symmetrical fenestration, compartmentalized interior spaces, and an elaborately decorated stair case - all traditional components of locally designed and constructed dwellings.

An account in the January 10, 1884 issue of the St. Mary's Beacon, describes the house as occupying "a position overlooking Brittan's Bay as far down as Ragged Point [and] is quite

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an imposing structure, is 32 x 34 feet, has 8 rooms with a closed in each, an 8 foot passage and is neatly and substantially finished in all details. Indeed, we never remember seeing finer work on any house." The Foxwell house is being carefully restored by the present owners.

SM-572, Benjamin Foxwell House
St. Mary's County
Maryland Comprehensive State Historic Preservation Data

Historic Context

Geographic Organization: Western Shore

Chronological/Developmental Period: Industrial-Urban Dominance, 1870-1930

Historic Period Theme: Architecture

Resource Type

Category: Building

Historic Environment: Rural

Historic Function and Use: Dwelling

Known Design Source: None

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF
HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Survey No. SM-572

Magi No.

DOE yes no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Captain Benjamin Foxwell House (pref.), Mt. Chimborazo

and/or common

2. Location

street & number Camp Calvert Road, 0.1 mile S of intersection of Camp Calvert and Rt. 5 not for publication

city, town Leonardtown X vicinity of congressional district 3

state Maryland county St. Mary's TM 40, P 164

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<u> </u> district	<u> </u> public	<u> </u> X occupied	<u> </u> agriculture <u> </u> museum
<u> </u> X building(s)	<u> </u> X private	<u> </u> unoccupied	<u> </u> commercial <u> </u> park
<u> </u> structure	<u> </u> both	<u> </u> work in progress	<u> </u> educational <u> </u> X private residence
<u> </u> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<u> </u> entertainment <u> </u> religious
<u> </u> object	<u> </u> in process	<u> </u> X yes: restricted	<u> </u> government <u> </u> scientific
	<u> </u> being considered	<u> </u> yes: unrestricted	<u> </u> industrial <u> </u> transportation
	<u> </u> X not applicable	<u> </u> no	<u> </u> military <u> </u> other:

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Eugene and Sally Carter (Mark and Amy Carter occupants)

street & number Rt 1 Box 43-A telephone no.: (301) 373-4863

city, town Hollywood state and zip code Md 20636

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. St. Mary's County Courthouse liber MRB 14

street & number folio 140

city, town Leonardtown state Md

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date federal state county local

pository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. SM-572

Condition

☐ excellent
☒ good
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered
☒ altered

Check one

☒ original site
☐ moved date of move _____

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

Contributing resource count: 1

The Captain Benjamin Foxwell house is located on the west side of Camp Calvert Road approximately 0.1 mile from the intersection of Camp Calvert Rd. and Maryland Route 5 near Leonardtown, Maryland. Oriented on an east/west axis, the house is situated on an uneven 1.01 acre tract that overlooks Foxwell's Wharf and nearly all of Breton Bay. The house is bounded on the west and north by wooded tracts, to the south by a descending hill, and to the east by the road.

The Captain Benjamin Foxwell house, constructed in 1883-1884, is a frame, two story, three bay, center passage, double-pile dwelling with a hip roof pierced by a single brick chimney flue. The house was constructed on a common bond brick foundation. Its circular sawn frame walls are sheathed with horizontal lap siding fastened to the frame with machine cut nails. The dwelling features a wide frieze and box cornice with a broad overhang. The roof is covered with raised seam metal.

The east or primary elevation is pierced on the first floor by a centrally located, four panel door with a three light transom flanked on either side by two-over-two, double-hung sash windows with functional louvered shutters. All of these bays are shaded by a porch supported by four square columns. The floor of the porch is even with ground level and has been covered with brick pavers. This porch replaced an earlier porch that featured turned posts and scroll sawn brackets. The second floor of this elevation is pierced by three, two-over-two windows.

The south or water side elevation is pierced by a centrally located set of French doors--each door with two panes--that are flanked on either side by two-over-two windows. An exterior end brick chimney, a later addition, is located in the area between the east window of this elevation. All of these bays are shaded by a similarly constructed two story porch supported by four square columns. The second story is pierced by a centrally located door flanked by two-over-two windows. The porch on the second story is enclosed with a balustrade and the cornice features decorative rafter tails and a dentilated cornice all added in the 1980s renovation. Attached to the west side of this elevation is a one story addition with a poured concrete foundation and a shed roof. It is pierced by a set of paired one-over-one windows. This addition was added in the mid-twentieth century.

The west elevation consists of two later shed roof additions and the main block. The south shed addition is pierced by a two-over-two window. The north shed addition is pierced by a set of sliding glass doors and a fixed single pane window. The north shed addition also features a roof covered with asphalt shingles. The second floor is pierced by three, two-over-two windows.

The north elevation is pierced by a door and two, two-over-two windows. The door is covered by a gable roof eave supported by a pair of brackets. The second floor is pierced by three, two-over-two windows.

The interior exhibits a center passage, double pile plan. The center passage features a decorative stair ornamented by a turned newel and banisters and scroll sawn brackets. The body of the stair is covered with beaded vertical matchstick. The passage permits entry into every space of

8. Significance

Survey No. SM-572

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1884 **Builder/Architect** Stephen Norris & Andrew Garner, contractors

check: Applicable Criteria: ☒ A ☒ B ☒ C ☐ D
and/or
Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Level of Significance: ☐ national ☒ state ☒ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

The Captain Benjamin Foxwell House is a frame, three bay, two story, Italianate-style dwelling located on a promontory overlooking Breton Bay near Leonardtown, Maryland. Constructed in 1883-1884, the dwelling is not only significant for its architectural integrity, but also features important associations with a prominent schooner captain and several local building contractors.

Born on September 21, 1835, Benjamin Foxwell began his maritime career as the captain of a freight vessel (United States Census, St. Mary's County, 1860). Foxwell, however, soon turned to oystering and in the late-nineteenth century he ran a "buy boat." A buy boat was essentially a boat, usually a bugeye, schooner, or pungie, that could measure the oysters and then transfer them to the market for the oystermen. The buy boat would then return from the market with supplies for the respective oystermen.

In the 1870s, Foxwell turned his interests towards public service. From 1873-1875, he served as the county sheriff and in 1875 until 1877 he served as a County Commissioner. The oyster trade during the late-nineteenth century, however, was beset by violence as oystermen often clashed with Virginia watermen during a series of fishing boundary disputes. On May 25, 1896, Foxwell was named Deputy Commander in charge of the vessel "Bessie Jones" of the Maryland State Fishery Force and sworn into office by J. Parran Crane Associate Judge of the Seventy Judicial District. While his stint as the commander only lasted a year or two, an incident involving the "Bessie Jones" would later make headlines. In 1906 the "Bessie Jones" and its then Captain George W. Maddox was involved in a shootout with the schooner of an oysterman named Alex Harris out of Oxford on the Eastern Shore. Harris' boat was illegally dredging near Cobb bar, and the boisterous Harris claimed that no one could stop him. One of Maddox's mates, Douglas Russel, did just that for he shot Harris in the chest killing him instantly (Wennersten, The Oyster Wars of the Chesapeake Bay, 92-93). This incident captures the violence that Foxwell tried to quell in 1896.

As a schooner captain, county commissioner, sheriff, and deputy commander Foxwell was well connected with the local political leaders and wealthy merchants, lawyers, and judges. Foxwell confirmed these connections with the construction of his house in 1883-1884. In the summer of 1883, Foxwell commissioned Stephen E. Norris and Andrew M. Garner to construct a

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. SM-572

St. Mary's Beacon, v 40:123, p 3, c 1, 10 January 1884

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 1.01 acres

Quadrangle name Leonardtown, Md

Quadrangle scale 1:24 000

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A

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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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D

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E

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F

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

Same as per deed description.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kirk E. Ranzetta, Historic Sites Surveyor

organization St. Mary's County Planning and Zoning

date April, 1997

street & number 22740 Washington Street

telephone 301-475-4662

city or town Leonardtown

state Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

DRONE
100 COMMUNITY TRAC
CROWNSVILLE, MD 21032-1
514-7200

SM-572, Captain Benjamin Foxwell House

St. Mary's County

7.1 Description

the first floor. The doorway leading to the south parlor has been removed and widened. The partition between the two south rooms has also been removed creating a single room on the south side. The north dining room retains its original decoration including a chair rail and baseboard. A four panel swinging door leads to the newly remodeled kitchen. This door features a circular hole, almost like a port-hole, for a round piece of glass. The second floor was not accessible at the time of the visit.

A small basement, whose bulkhead entry is located on the north side of the house, features a small excavated space with whitewashed brick walls. Curiously, one of the brick walls is pierced by a window. The window, however, is well over two feet from the actual exterior foundation wall. This detail suggests that the excavated foundation might date to an earlier structure.

The house also features several archaeological features including a modern brick building that once stood approximately 10 yards to the northwest of the house and a trash pit located to the north of the house near a steep ravine.

Two horse barns constructed in the 1980s, a workshed dating from the mid-twentieth century, and a brick lined well are located a short distance to the northwest of the house.

SM-572, Captain Benjamin Foxwell House
St. Mary's County
8.1 Significance

frame house overlooking his ancestral home near Foxwell's Wharf. Norris and Garner were well appointed contractors who had also built the house at Old Patuxent Farm (SM-527), St. Peter's Episcopal Church Rectory (SM-531), and renovated St. George's Episcopal Church at Poplar Hill (SM-12). Called "Mt. Chimborazo," Foxwell's dwelling was a two story, three bay, center passage, double-pile plan dwelling constructed in the Italianate-style. The building's symmetrical facade, compartmentalized interior spaces, and decorative stair elements represented traditional components of locally designed and constructed dwellings. On January 10, 1884, a correspondent for the St. Mary's Beacon described the finished house during a visit. He states, "The dwelling, which occupies a position overlooking Brittan's Bay as far down as Ragged Point, is quite an imposing structure, is 32 x 34 feet, has 8 rooms with a closet in each, an 8 foot passage and is neatly and substantially finished in all details. Indeed, we never remember seeing finer work on any house."

While the Beacon's unequivocal praise for Norris and Garner's work reasserted the important theme of improvement in the county, the newspaper also notes that "Most of the lumber was prepared at the sawmill of Mr. A. F. Fenwick, Jr., the bricklaying was done by Mr. Garner and the plastering by Messrs. Sullivan and Bland. Capt. Foxwell assures us that the total cost of the house, material, work and all will not exceed \$4000. The building compares favorably with any in our section and proves that a good lumber can be prepared at home and as fine building done by our native talent as can be obtained by sending to the cities for workmen and material." This brief description of the building, its contractors and subcontractors, as well as its suppliers, provides a vivid glimpse into the process of building in St. Mary's County. While colored by the Beacon's overarching agenda of civic and domestic improvement as well as mercantile self-sufficiency, the description captures a turning point in the county's construction industry. Interestingly, only a few months before the building of the Foxwell house, the Beacon reported on June 7, 1883 that Mr. Norris was in Baltimore to purchase lumber for building the house at Old Patuxent Farm (SM-527).

On October 31, 1904, Foxwell died at the age of 70 at Mt. Chimborazo. His wife Annie M. Foxwell died nine years later on December 27, 1913. The house remained in the Foxwell family until 1942 when it was purchased by the President of the First National Bank of St. Mary's R. Bascom Broun and his wife Ann M. Broun. The Broun family made several changes to the building including the removal of the wall separating the two south rooms on the first floor. They also erected two shed roof additions, replaced a window on the south elevation with an elongated set of French doors, and also added an exterior end chimney on the south elevation as well. The building is currently owned by Eugene and Sally Carter but occupied by their son Mark and his wife Amy who plan to gradually restore the dwelling.

— SM-572, Captain Benjamin Foxwell House
St. Mary's County
8.2 Significance

Chain-of-Title (Please note that all deeds were found in the Land Records located in the St. Mary's County Courthouse in Leonardtown, Maryland unless otherwise noted.)

Reference: Liber MRB 14, Folio 140
Grantee: Eugene C. and Sally Carter
Grantor: R. Bascom Broun III and Joseph M. Gough, Jr., exec of R. Bascom Broun, Jr.
Date: June 14, 1978
Note: The tract is listed as containing 1.01 acres.

Reference: Liber CBG 13, Folio 346
Grantee: R. Bascom and Ann M. Broun
Grantor: First National Bank of St. Mary's
Date: April 14, 1942

Reference: Liber JMM 8, Folio 365
Grantee: First National Bank of St. Mary's
Grantor: Edwinetta S. Zurhorst
Date: October 12, 1926
Note: Called Lawrence's Point but more recently Mt. Chimborazo, the property consists of two tracts totalling three acres.

— **Broken Chain of Title**

Reference: Liber JMM 3, Folio 297
Grantee: Clara H. Hodgdon (aka Clara H. Hyatt)
Grantor: A. Dana Hodgdon
Date: September 10, 1925

Reference: Liber EBA 19, Folio 80
Grantee: Clara H. Hyatt (Clara H. Hodgdon)
Grantor: J. Allan and Clara C. Coad
Date: April 8, 1920

Reference: Liber EBA 18, Folio 49
Grantee: J. Allan and Clara C. Coad
Grantor: H. Webster and Elsie M. Foxwell
Date: February 18, 1913

Reference: Liber EBA 4, Folio 48
Grantee: H. Webster Foxwell
Grantor: Benjamin Foxwell
Date: August 22, 1904
Note: The property is still called Lawrence Point or Mt. Chimborazo. Purchased for \$1200, the tract consists of three acres and was still subject to the life estate of Mother Nannie Foxwell.

— SM-572, Captain Benjamin Foxwell House
St. Mary's County
8.3 Significance

Reference: Liber EBA 4, Folio 47

Grantee: Benjamin and Annie M. Foxwell

Grantor: Thomas T. and Rachal R. Foxwell

Date: August 22, 1904

Note: Benjamin and Annie buy the three acre parcel for \$290.

Reference: Liber JTB 2, Folio 401

Grantee: Stephen Foxwell

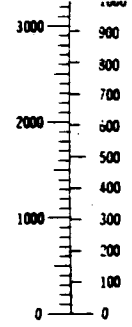
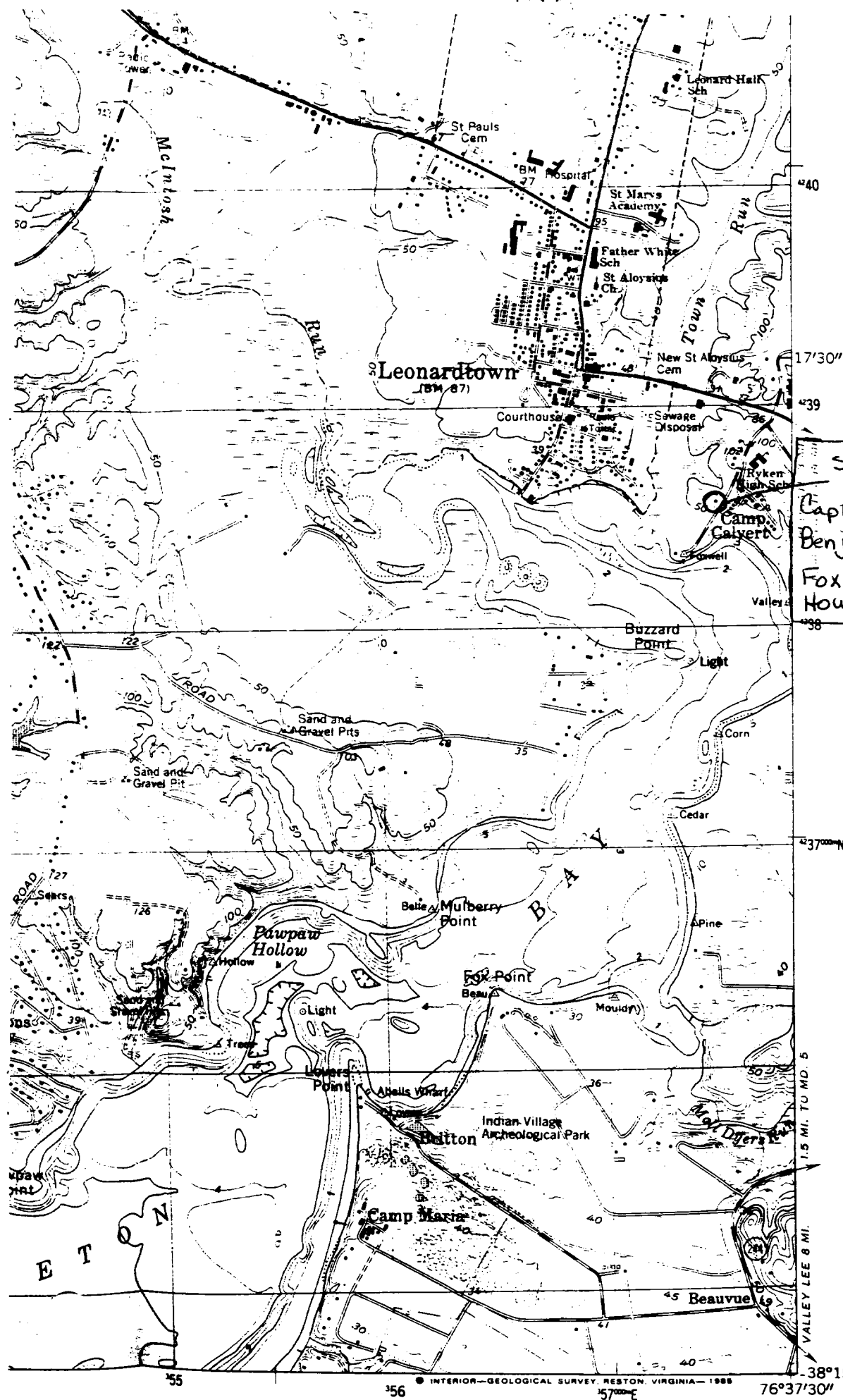
Grantor: Benjamin G. and Martha E. Harris

Date: 1857

Note: Stephen Foxwell purchases a series of tracts known as Lansdale, as well as St. Lawrence Point and John Wheeler's Lot. The property was bounded by the St. Lawrence Run, the road from Leonardtown to Ellenborough, and a public landing.

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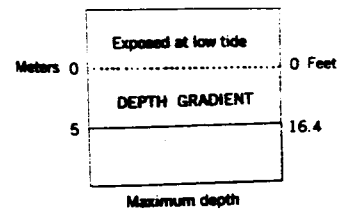


Feet	Meters
1	3.048
2	6.096
3	9.144
4	12.192
5	15.240
6	18.288
7	21.336
8	24.384
9	27.432
10	30.480

To convert feet to meters
multiply by .3048

To convert meters to feet
multiply by 3.2808

SM-572
Capt.
Benjamin
Foxwell
House



LEONARDTOWN, MD.
SW/4 LEONARDTOWN 15' QUADRANGLE
38076-C6-TB-024

1963
BATHYMETRY ADDED 1982
PHOTOREVISED 1984
DMA 5660 I SW SERIES V833

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy-duty ————— Light-duty —————

(PIN-POINT
5660 I SW)



CM-572

Capt. Ben Foxwell / inc.

St. Mary's County

Kore Dunbar

May 1997

Ad. CHPO

Cr. W. elevation

1 of 4



SM-572

Capt. Ben Foxwell House

St. Mary's County

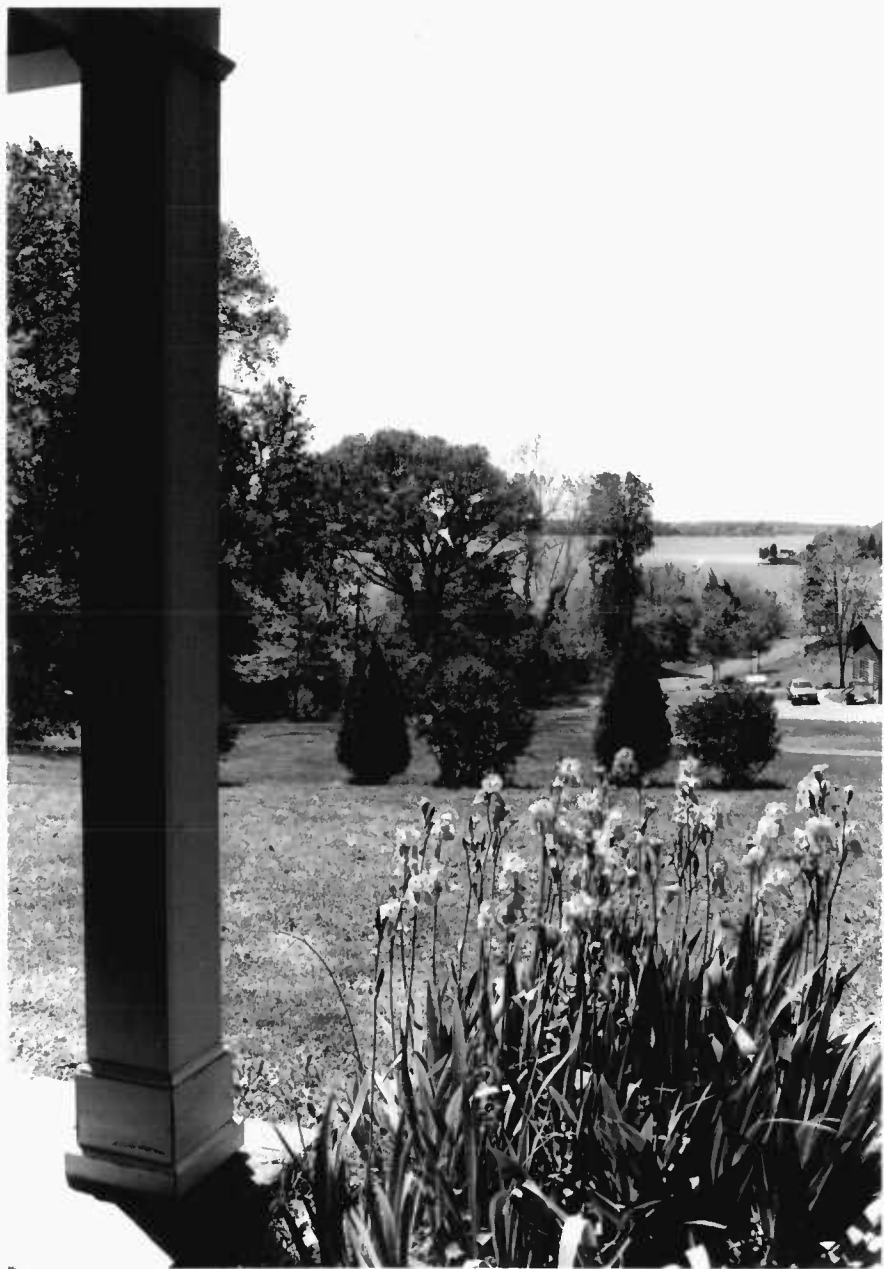
Kirk Rancetta

May 1997

MD SHPO

N4 E elevations

2 of 4



SM-572

Capt. Ben Powell House

St. Mary's County

Kirk Rancette

May 1997

Md SHPO

View from porch looking S.

3 of 4



SM-572

Capt. Ben Forsell House

St. Mary's County

Kirk Rancetta

May 1997

Ad SHPO

Interior view - looking N

4 of 4